

Red Cross blood donor  
policy exclude gay men.



Campus groups cry foul; Promislow  
backs down.

by Kristen Andrews • see page 3

by Liz Unna • see page 3

# THE MCGILL DAILY

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MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1993

## Electoral Reform Hurts Small Parties

*'You got the money, honey, we got the time' — Parliament*

BY KRISTEN BOON

Changes to the Canada Elections Act which increased the deposit required from federal candidates by \$800 are being criticized as undemocratic.

Today is the registration deadline for federal candidates, and independents and smaller parties are furious. They claim the amendments impede the political process and contradict the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"The Canada Elections Act hinders the principle of universal suffrage guaranteed under the Charter of Rights. It gives the right to the established parties — who represent only two per cent of the people — to impose their will on the population," said Arnold August, a candidate for the Marxist-Leninist Party in the St. Henri-Westmount riding.

Bill C-114 which was passed unanimously in the House of Commons on May 6, has changed the requirements for federal hopefuls. Candidates previously had to submit a \$200 deposit and collect 25 signatures, but the new legislation is much tougher. Now \$1000 and 100 supporting signatures must accompany any election bid. In addition, in order for a party to gain official status, 50 candidates must be nominated for a grand total of \$50,000.

Fifty per cent of the deposit will be returned, however, if an election expenses report is properly filed. The remaining half can be collected if the candidate receives 15 per cent of the vote in their riding.

Steven Ball, special assistant to Electoral Reform Committee Chair Jim Hawks, said changes to the act were long overdue.

"In 1874 the deposit was created, and it was set at \$200 in 1882," said Ball. "Inflation alone would make it equivalent to \$2500 today."

Ball also said that the high expense of tracking down candidates to complete filing requirements such as tax returns and income forms warranted an increased deposit. In the 1988 election six per cent of candidates avoided these procedures.

Smaller parties, however, view the amendment to the Act as a corruption of the democratic forum. Rolf Bramann, the Québec Spokesman for the Green Party, said "The

bill is anti-democratic. The big parties voted while others were away on holidays. Their aim is to kill all the small parties to make life difficult for everyone else."

Supporters of the amendment argue that serious contenders will overcome the financial implications. Louise Pilon, a National Party candidate in the St. Henri-Westmount riding, said "It is an excellent way of selecting people. People who are serious and feel they can make a difference will find a way. I

do not think it is impeding the political process."

Ball echoed the sentiment. "Clearly \$1000 is not insignificant, but you get \$500 back, and it shouldn't be difficult to persuade a bank to lend you the rest for a month."

"It is not an astoundingly difficult problem to come up with the money. If it is, you have to wonder whether a candidate has a platform with popularity," Ball said.

Arnold August of the Marxist-

Leninist Party disagreed with this principle.

"How can money be a criteria for being serious?" August said. "What does it mean — an excuse to hinder people other than those connected with power and money."

The Rhinoceros Party's "Declaration of Near-Open Rebellion" also targets Bill C-114, which contains the "infamous, immoral, and unconstitutional \$200 deposit."

The Rhinos have appealed for aid to the Canadian Human Rights

Commission, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, and the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development.

Although the Canada Elections Act has been under revision for some time, other issues are unresolved. Both the Spicer Commission and the 1990 Royal Commission on Electoral Reform failed to address either the right to candidate recall, or the current debate on the deposit system.

## No ID sticker means students pay more

*Students' Society petitions Registrar*



DAILY PHOTO: DEREK FUNG

A security guard at the Musée des Beaux Arts throws up his hands at yet another unvalidated McGill ID card. Student discounts at the museum will be a problem without validation.

BY ZOREEN NURANEY

The university's decision to replace ID card stickers with bar codes could make it harder to get student discounts.

Students are worried they will have trouble proving they are enrolled, since merchants have traditionally used the stickers as proof.

Andrew Work, VP-External for the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) said McGill should be providing students proof of enrollment.

The SSMU has launched a petition to have the stickers returned.

"Most students are on a tough

budget and need the extra little bit of help," said Work.

The move to replace validating stickers was made at a Registrar's meeting on July 19. SSMU is claiming this was done arbitrarily without student consultation.

The petition reads: "The Registrar's office has decided, without consulting the students of McGill University, to discontinue the practice of giving out validation stickers... thereby draining already meagre financial resources and reducing quality of academic life of McGill students."

The main reason for discontinu-

ing the stickers was the long lines faced by students twice a year, according to John Ormiston, supervisor of the ID Validation Centre.

"ID sticker validation is really an insecure method of security," Ormiston said. "Why stand in line for a sticker?"

Some feel that avoiding the lines is a good enough reason to abolish the system.

"I see the lines and get really annoyed," said Amreen Omar, U2 English. "It never really stopped my life. For three semesters I was without a validated ID!"

According to Ormiston, the validating sticker has never been concrete proof of student status. "It is the merchants who decided to trust the sticker in the first place," he said.

McGill's Registrar, Jean-Paul Schuller, said that it is not the responsibility of the university to help students get discounts.

"The university hasn't contracted the obligation to help markets implement their promotions," said Schuller.

"The assumption is that the card is valid, not that it isn't," he added.

However, one teller at the ticket

wicket of the Musée des Beaux Arts is predicting problems for McGill students.

"Students have to have a validated ID. It will definitely be a problem," the teller said.

As well, representatives from Via Rail and Canadian Airlines told the Daily that if student IDs are not validated, no discounts would be given.

Another problem experienced with sticker validation was that students would register in a course, get their validation sticker and then withdraw in order to get student privileges both on and off campus.

"I don't want to play policeman," Schuller said. "We should create an air-tight procedure once and for all. I remain confident that we can ensure that a large number of students aren't prejudiced against this new system."

Schuller said he hopes major off-campus businesses will adapt to McGill's System.

"I don't have a lot of hard evidence that it's a problem. It seems like it hasn't extended beyond Air Canada and Via Rail," said Schuller.

The SSMU petition is available at the main desk in the Union building.

DAILY GRAPHIC BY KRISTEN PETERSON



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No. 10

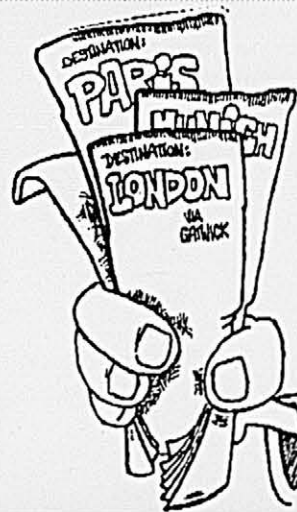
Held on Thursday, September 30, 1993 at 18:00 hours  
in the M.A.C.E.S. Building Lounge, McGill University  
3437 Peel Montreal, Canada H3A 1W7

- 10.01 Opening of the meeting
  - Rules of the Assembly
  - Voting Rights
- 10.02 Reading and adoption of Agenda
- 10.03 Reading and adoption of previous minutes
- 10.04 Activity Report
- 10.05 Nomination of chief returning officer
- 10.06 Annual report
- 10.07 Allocation of surplus
- 10.08 Nomination of auditors
- 10.09 Amendments to the bylaws
- 10.10 Election of the Board
- 10.11 Varia
- 10.12 Closing of the meeting

*Guy Paré*  
Vice-President Executive

## Student Christmas Flights

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DATE: Wednesday, September 29, 1993  
TIME: 2:00 - 4:00 PM  
PLACE: McGill Faculty Club, Ballroom,  
3450 McTavish Street

Organized by the Office of Fellowships and Awards. 398-3995



## BASKETBALL VOLLEYBALL

Registration for Intramural Basketball  
and Volleyball continues until  
**September 29th, 17:00 hrs.**

Campus Recreation Office — G35  
Sir Arthur Currie Gymnasium  
475 Pine Avenue West

Space is limited — registration is on a first come first served basis.  
All teams must be represented at the Captain's meeting.  
A team that is not represented will not be included in the league.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL



**398-7011**





# Blood drive discriminatory, students say

## Screening policies exclude gay men

BY KRISTIN ANDREWS

The Red Cross is facing criticism for their presence in the Shatner building last week from students who say their screening policies for blood donors are discriminatory.

Some concerned students are now working to make sure that the Red Cross' annual blood drive isn't allowed back until it changes its policies, although they would not interfere with this year's drive.

The Canadian Red Cross refuses to accept blood donations from men who have ever had sex with another man, because they consider gay men a "high risk group" for transmission of the HIV virus which causes AIDS.

"This is a blatantly homophobic policy," said Mary-Margaret Jones, a member of the Lesbians, Bisexuals and Gays of McGill (LBGM). "Students' Society should not have blood drives in the Shatner Building until the Red Cross cleans up their act."

Douglas Buckley of the AIDS action group ACT-UP Montréal said the Red Cross' policy of excluding gay men does not take into account the prevalence of safe sex practices and differing levels of risk within the gay community.

"We have to screen people who engage in high risk activities, not high risk groups," he said.

Dr. Gilles Delage is the Deputy Medical Director of the Red Cross. He says the Red Cross policy is not discriminatory.

"We don't ask 'Are you gay?'. We ask 'If you are a man, have you had sex with another man since 1977'," said Delage. "Lesbians who want to give blood are fine. They're not a high risk group."

Gay men are targeted because any gay sex is viewed as a high risk activity by the Red Cross, according to Delage. In almost 80 per cent of all AIDS cases reported in Canada last year, the risk factor associated with transmission was men having sex with other men.

Even if a condom is used, Delage said, condoms are only 80-90 per cent effective. "In a situation [like gay sex] in which there is a high risk of transmission, there's still a 10 per cent risk we're not willing to take," he said.

But Jones said that the Red Cross should look at the statistics again. The fastest growing group of people who test positive for HIV are straight women.

David D'Andrea, the LBGM political co-ordinator, asked why the Red Cross does not exclude straight people who have had unprotected sex which would put them at risk for HIV.

"It's like the Red Cross is saying, 'Okay, we're not really worried about offending this marginal minority (gay men),'," said D'Andrea.

Recently the Red Cross has agreed to remove another contro-

versial question on their screening questionnaire. They stopped asking potential donors whether they were born in the Caribbean, or certain parts of Africa where AIDS is more common than in Canada.

Delage said that the question about African origin was removed from the questionnaire because of the development of a new diagnostic test for HIV.

"People from Africa and the Caribbean were screened because there is a type of AIDS virus (HIV<sub>2</sub>) which was prevalent in those countries and which the Red Cross could not detect in the blood screening," said Delage.

But critics say the Red Cross policy to refuse blood from people from Africa was founded on racism, not medical concern. People who were born in Africa or the Caribbean weren't allowed to give blood regardless of how long they'd been living in Canada (where presumably they would be in the same risk group as any other Canadian).

Jones approached organizers of the McGill Red Cross blood drive and VP Internal Cornell Wright in August to request that the Red Cross not be allowed on campus until they changed their policies.

"We understood [Jones'] concerns," said Jana Taylor, co-chair of the SSMU blood drive. Taylor and co-chair Faye Nathoo tried to negotiate the Red Cross policy against accepting blood from gay men but they were unsuccessful, they said.

Because of the efforts of the blood drive organizers, LBGM agreed not to interfere with the blood drive last week, Jones said.

"I know there are enough students who are incensed that we could get a large enough coalition to oppose the Red Cross (in the future)," Jones said. Jones said she plans to organize an education campaign about the discriminatory policies of the Red Cross at later blood drives in the Medical and Engineering faculties this year.



DAILY PHOTO: JEFF CORNIE

# Passage to India cancelled for Promislow

## Women's groups object to vp university affairs handling of conference

BY LIZ UNNA

A Students' Society executive will not be going to a conference in India as a result of controversy over her arbitrary handling of the selection process.

Ruth Promislow, vp university affairs for the Students' Society, came under fire from various women's groups on campus because she neglected to contact them about the upcoming conference.

"I think what's really important about this is that because Promislow didn't tell campus groups about the conference, it might be too late to send three delegates," said Sonia Goswami, a representative from the Sexual Assault Center.

Goswami was elected to go to the conference by a caucus of various women's groups on campus after Promislow withdrew her name as a delegate. Promislow was invited to this caucus but did not attend.

The International Conference is entitled "Violence Against Women: Women Against Violence," and will be held in India this December.

The organizers, Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersay Women's University in Bombay, have invited 20 Indian women and 20 Canadian women to the five-day conference in the hopes of exchanging information and strategies between women working in the area of sexual violence. Three McGill delegates were invited to attend.

Promislow insists that she was invited to attend the conference as an individual, not as a Students' Society VP.

"[The Canadian co-ordinator

of the conference] extended the invitation to me as an independent and that was my understanding," said Promislow.

However, letters written to Promislow from the Canadian co-ordinator, Sasha McInnes, addressed her as: "VP University/Student Affairs".

A letter dated June 28 read: "I [McInnes] am inviting three participants from the Students' Society...I would appreciate hearing back from you at the earliest so that there is sufficient time to locate other student representatives."

Promislow claims "In our phone conversations it wasn't that way."

Another letter invited three women from McGill, stating: "The purpose of having three representatives from McGill is that we want to be very inclusive and would prefer to have one white woman, one woman from the non-dominant group and one francophone."

Promislow only approached one

student, Rima Banerji.

"I accepted so that I could secure another place for someone else from Shakti or from the Sexual Assault Center," says Banerji.

When prompted, Promislow added that she had also been asked to contact a francophone McGill student. "I told her (McInnes) that I did not know of any students; it was summer, it was very difficult for me to get in touch with people," said Promislow.

When asked why she did not approach any students at the Women's Union or at the Sexual Assault Center who were on campus during the summer, Promislow responded "I didn't think of doing it formally... Unfortunately someone didn't point it out earlier [that the process of selection was flawed]. I guess that maybe that was a mistake on my part. I don't think that it's worthy of a Daily story."

One member of the Shakti Women of Colour Collective said



DAILY PHOTO: LARA NAHAS

Ruth Promislow, vp University Affairs

the problem wasn't that Promislow was attending the conference, but that the selection process itself was flawed.

"It should have been done in a fair and democratic way, to confirm the qualifications of the person who is nominated. This qualified person could easily be Ruth. But by nominating herself and by not speaking to other groups — especially as vp University Affairs — she discredited herself," she said.

## EVENTS

### Rhinoceros Cabaret

Every Monday night at Cafe Campus (Prince Arthur and St. Laurent) till October 25th. Info 345-5534 or 499-0097

### Womens Union

General Meeting for volunteers interested in 'Heriden' the womanist/feminist journal. Today at 5:30 PM in Union 423.

### Ethical Treatment of Animals

General Interest meeting today at 4:00 PM in Union 425

### QPIRG

General Interest meeting today at

6:30 in the Eaton Building room 505. McGill produces 6 tonnes of solid waste a day... we need your help!

### Self Help for Women with Eating Problems

Are you preoccupied with food? Group meeting today, 7:00 PM in Union 430.

### McGill Volunteer Bureau

Bi-annual Symposium in conjunction with the Montreal Volunteer Bureau. Wednesday September 29th in Union ballroom. 10:00AM to 3:00 PM. Please stop by.

### McGill International

'Get-know-each-other-meeting' for

reps of McGill Clubs interested in international development. Wednesday, September 29, at 3550 University. 12 to 2PM. Call 398-4197 to reserve a spot. Pizza will be served.

### NDG Food Depot

Volunteers required for a new information, referral and advocacy service. Call Dan or Jason at 484-1471

**McGill Daily:**  
**Cyberfunky science meeting. Today, 4:30pm. Snap-happy photographers meet, Tues. 4:30. Be there!**



## COMMENT

## Politics in the Gutter

*Why the Tories will Lose the Election*

Dipping into gutter politics last Wednesday, the Tories made a fundamental mistake in their bid for reelection. Catering to partisan crowds in southern Ontario, Kim Campbell compared the Liberals' policy book, *Creating Opportunities*, to Mao Tse Tung's *Little Red Book*. (They are both bound in red.)

"It reminds me of another red book that people used to wave around in the sixties," Campbell said. "The red book of liberal promises ... is precisely that," she cooed, calling it "a recipe for putting Canada in the red."

Campbell, who had promised the electorate to run a principled campaign and to stay out of gutter politics, seems not to have been able to resist the sort of red baiting her which made her alma mater British Columbia Social Credit party famous.

Campbell is just another old dog that can't learn new tricks. For a while it seemed that she did indeed have some principles, even if they were Nietzschean (which is shorthand for 'elitist'). She knows better than Canadians what is best for Canadians — remember the "enemies of Canada" and the "lazy S.O.B." comments). But now, true to her political heritage of used car salesmen, back room deals, and Christian morality, she can't resist the kind of smear tactics which have been the right wing's stock of trade since, oh, the McCarthy era of the 1950s.

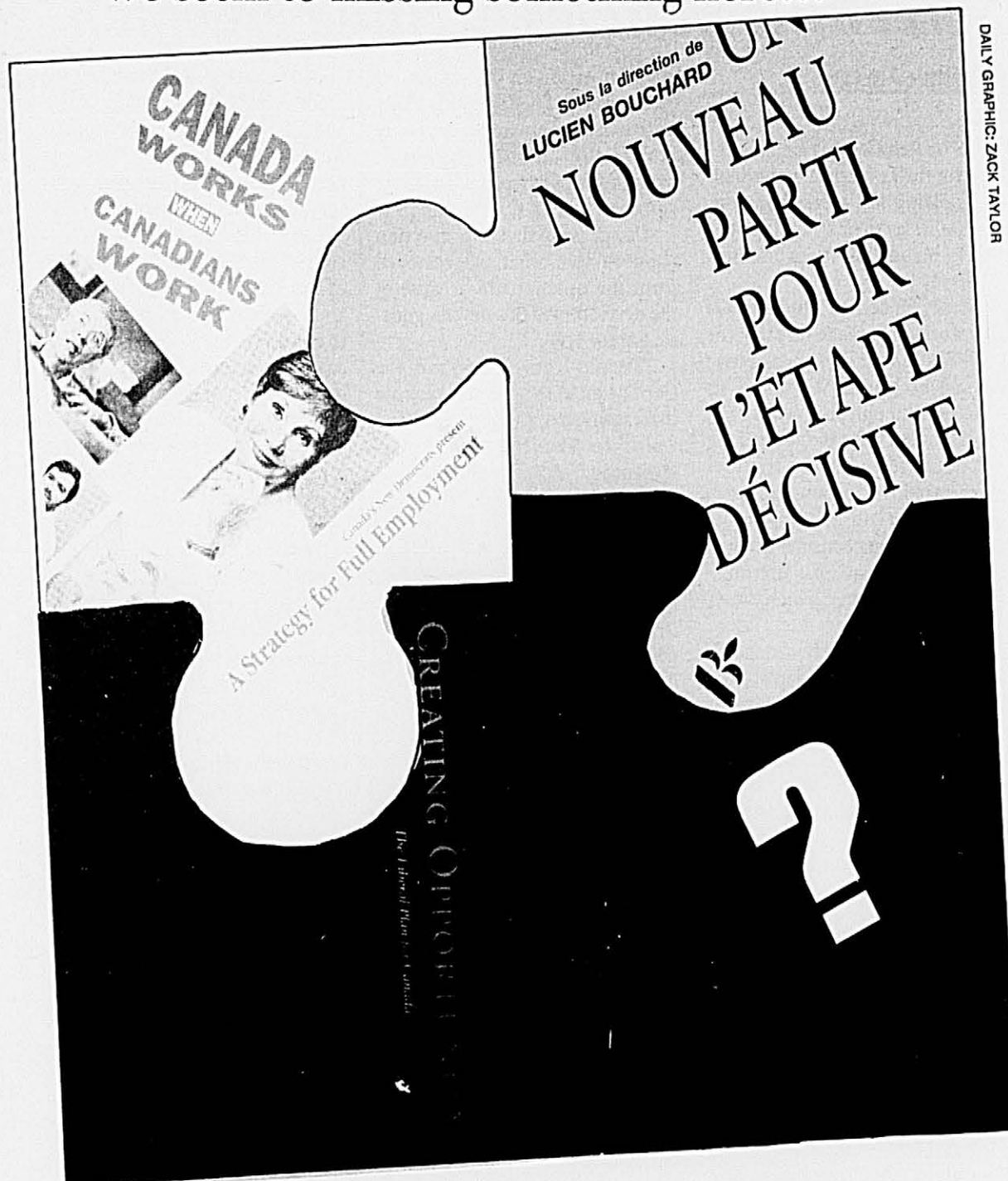
The hyena has shown her spots; she does, after all, embody what her party, the PCs, and political mentor, Brian Mulroney, have given her.

If I were a Liberal I would be jumping up and down with glee in the nine years of Tory slime that has accumulated in Canada's political gutters since Brian Mulroney took office in 1984. Senate patronage, cabinet ministers who were forced to resign because of dubious dealings, the Tory MPs who have faced criminal prosecution, pork barrel jails in Baie Comeau, expensive helicopters, declining social services, increased taxes, and of course all the constitutional wrangling that Brian Mulroney, the most unpopular prime minister in Canadian history, presided over, are all part of Ms. Campbell's political heritage, amen.

The Liberals can't but win a gutter-fest; all they need to do is keep the sceptre of the double chin alive.

Louis Helbig

We seem to be missing something here...



The Daily welcomes all letters under 300 words. Add your name, program, year and phone number. Anonymity can be provided; talk to an editor beforehand. We print all letters provided they are not racist, sexist, homophobic or slanderous. Opinions can be expressed in the form of a Hyde Park, no more than 500 words.

## LETTERS

### Good Luck Dave

To the Daily:

I would like to commend Mr. D. D'Andrea for his courage for running to be the next St. Leonard Member of Parliament. The sacrifice he will have to make in terms of his study and personal time, to run in a riding, that, by his own admittance, he does not expect to win, is not inconsiderable.

His principles have led him to take this opportunity to present policies he believes in to the people of St. Leonard, at great personal expense. I am of the opinion that this sort of selflessness, from individuals from any political stripe, is the sort of ethos that will help Canadians to recover their confidence in their political system. Even as a long time member of the Progressive Conservative Party, I can appreciate Mr. D'Andrea's commitment to his ideals, and admire his courage.

Good luck Dave!

G. Andrew Work

### Unfortunate Leanings

To the Daily:

Or maybe you have changed your name to the Young Liberal Daily.

For two days now you have featured front-page articles with banner headlines (by Vanina Mastracci on Sept. 21 and by Dave Everett on Sept. 22) singing the unqualified praises of the Young Liberals and of the Liberal election platform. (For the record, I am going to vote Liberal, but not because I believe the hype you've been spewing.)

Neither article presents any independent or non-partisan analysis; the latter is even written by a supporter of the Young Liberals (though that is nowhere mentioned). The second article also includes, along with the unreasoned eulogy of the Liberals, hopelessly partisan dismissals of the PCs and the NDP — to which you will have to give equal time to respond. All this in the guise of a news story (!), as

if we are to believe that this is the work of an unbiased reporter, not some Liberal propagandist who has lucked into free advertising at the hands of reporter wanna-bes.

Even the *Montréal Gazette* does a better job of providing the kind of reasoned, independent election analysis students need to make up their minds. And yet you people have the chutzpah to suggest in the same issue that we could learn news—writing from you at the Daily Days seminars! Your news editors should resign in shame — or at least take seminars themselves in responsible journalism and journalistic ethics.

Yours in criticism that is growing less comradely all the time,

Daron Westman

### Knee-Jerk Redux

To the Daily:

I was strongly offended by the "Comment" article written by Dave

Austin which served as Thursday's exercise in knee-jerk political correctness practised in the absence of critical thought. Dave suggested that the Red Cross uses their questionnaire as a "quiet platform for a very discrete form of racism...far from humanitarian". As a recipient of blood products on more than one occasion, I'm awfully glad that they're as "choosy" as they are. It's not just some Africans and Caribbeans that are turned away, but anyone who satns an elevated chance of carrying the HIV virus. Why? Because until the antibodies show up in the blood stream (as long as 6 months), all the laboratory tests in the world will do no good in detecting the HIV virus. Between the time the individual is exposed and the time that person tests positive, all the Red Cross can use to screen HIV infected blood is that questionnaire.

This means lives, not just hurt feel-

ings or the inconvenience of having waited in line for an hour before being turned away. The percentage of the population carrying the HIV virus in most of these "banned" countries is in the double digits — that's not just a "common disease"; most people use the word "epidemic". The question is not one of the origins of AIDS, but rather where HIV is right now.

I wonder if Dave has been the recipient of any blood products recently and has paused to really think about the ramifications of a lax questionnaire. I wonder if he's watched any loved ones waste away from this disease that took my uncle's teeth, hair, dignity, and eventually his life (hardly "miraculous", Dave). Finally, I wonder how much thought he really put into writing that whiny and dangerously naive article last Thursday.

Andrew Bono

MSc2,

Earth and Planetary Sciences

**SINCE 1911**  
**Vol. 83 No. 13**

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**THE MCGILL DAILY**



# Daily retrospective: Twenty-five years later

## The McGill's Black Writers Congress

by Dave Austin

**N**ext month marks the 25th anniversary of the 1968 Montreal's Black Writers Congress.

The Congress was organized 25 years ago during a long Thanksgiving weekend by the West Indian Students' Association of McGill University. The conference, carried out in the former Union Ballroom, featured a wide range of scholars and activists from a variety of countries and backgrounds.

Stokely Carmichael, one of the fathers of the 'Black Power Movement' was in attendance as was Alvin Poussaint, today a prominent psychologist at Harvard University, Michael X, the radical British activist who was largely influenced by Malcolm X. In addition, renowned historian and political activist Walter Rodney, and the late CLR James, the prolific writer, historian, social philosopher were present.

It was after this conference that Rodney was forced to return to Montreal after being refused reentry into Jamaica, where he was teaching history at the University of the West Indies. His refused entry was to a large degree a result of his political views and his strong links with the Jamaican masses.

It would be less than a year after this very conference that some of the very organizers of the Congress would occupy the Sir George Williams (presently Concordia) computer room, charging some of their professors with racism and unfair academic evaluating practices.

In order to commemorate the Congress' 25th anniversary the Daily presents to you a series of articles on the conference (which the Daily covered extensively) originally printed in the Daily in October, 1968. These articles are also being reprinted in anticipation of an October 15 presentation by Robert Hill — Garvey authority, historian, close associate of the late Walter Rodney, and a key-note speaker at the original Congress.

[McGill Daily,  
October 11, 1968]

Daily: Could you tell us something about the aims and objectives of the Congress, what you hope to achieve?

**Keith Byrne:** At the present moment, the struggle between the oppressed and the oppressors is bordering on total racial war. Black people are becoming really fed up with being pushed about and it is necessary now, especially with what's happening in the States - spontaneous outbursts of violence - to take some sort of perspective as to where we go, what the problem really is, who we are, where we come from, and where we are going.

This is the purpose: to trace the whole history of black literature. That is why the program is called, "The dynamics of Black Liberation".



Rosie Douglas

Can you tell us something about the people, or groups that are organising the congress?

**Rosie Douglas:** Well, originally, we started with a group of people who were interested in trying to organize a conference which would bring to light the very crucial problems which the black

community in Montreal and those all over the world are facing. These people developed a certain interest realizing that in effect the brunt of the struggles was really being waged by our brothers in the United States and all over the world.

We, as part of this struggle, felt over the years that although we were part of the entire thing, maybe there was a need to go back to the roots of the problem, to find out where the problem really started, what we were really subjected to, how we find ourselves in the position that we are in today, and how can we now organize ourselves to meet this problem head on. In other words, what perspectives can we see for the future.

Something happened [here] which probably will stand out as the landmark of this Congress. In that for the first time we were able to bring together English and French-speaking black people to unite and join this very serious effort.

This I think will be the primary achievement of the Congress, not to mention the fact that there were brothers and sisters from Africa, Canada, the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

Do you see a relation between the struggle for black liberation and the student movement, the idea that students, white and black, in North America and in world university campuses are oppressed in a certain fashion. Do you think there can be, as the Panthers have said in their manifesto, a principled coalition between the oppressed blacks and the oppressed whites, or do you

think that students are an oppressed class at all?

**Keith Byrne:** This is a very tricky question, the participation of white students in black liberation. Of course they are in some way related. But I do not think you can

compare them because they are two separate issues. Students and student movements did not at any time experience the type of deceleration, deculturation and dehumanization that black people have encountered or experienced; so in this respect, I think that one has to draw very clear lines as to what you meant by that.

I think one of the ideas behind the white students in the U.S., those who are acting at Columbia for instance, that, granted, any oppression that there might be in the universities is of a different order from the oppression of blacks. Nevertheless, they are related in that they're both part of an imperialist and racist society, which creates a centre for training white students to participate in a society that treats blacks the way it does. Do you consider that an alliance in this sense is important?

**Rosie Douglas:** At this particular point I think it is absolutely necessary, despite the similarities which obviously exist between the two different groups, for whites to organize themselves and work on their level while blacks work on theirs. We might be working towards a similar goal, but the time for a coalition - I do not think we have arrived at that stage yet.

What about a coalition like the Peace and Freedom Party in California?

**Keith Byrne:** At the moment, it is difficult for black people to really trust them [white liberals], except to say "Well look, we know that you are interested, we know that you understand the problem." But our problems are the problems of self-respect. How can we respect ourselves if we just sit down and let the liberals tell us "Well this is the way you must go, that is the way you must go." And blacks just remain like puppets for time immemorial.

Black people must organize themselves, and that is what is happening with the Peace and Freedom Party and the Black Panthers. The Black Panthers remain a black organization.

But whites and blacks have to get together at some point or else Karl Marx wasted his time. It has to happen because otherwise the class struggle will become abstract. But at the present moment, we have much more work than you.

**Rosie Douglas:** In a recent article, CLR James delineated that particular problem. He even carried it further, saying that in effect, the black liberation struggle is in the vanguard, and has awakened America to the reality of the racist nature of American society. We are the ones who are carrying the brunt of the battle. It is the re-awakening started by the blacks which allowed the whites left to revive and breathe a new hope again.



Keith Byrne

One thing which a number of people who are interested in the Congress are asking is why so many of the prominent people whom you have invited, presumably very busy people, would be interested or willing to come to Montreal.

**Keith Byrne:** I think that the program attracted them. They think that it is of vital importance that white people be there to listen to how black people think for a change, instead of listening to how white people think about us.

As the editorial of the pamphlet explains, it is time that we become subjects of history. A certain sanity will come out as a result of a dialogue between the people and the intellectual, rather than the objects of history, rather than people just passively suffering.

Three or four of the people who are coming to address the congress are well known, having appeared in newspaper headlines and stories and so on. Would you care to talk about the people who are less well known?

**Keith Byrne:** I think it is very important to discuss (C.L.R.) James very seriously. James is very much underplayed; at the same time he's considered one of the key thinkers of the 20th century. In my opinion, he can be compared to Lenin, Russell, Trotsky or any of the modern thinkers. Kwame Nkrumah, in his autobiography, says that it was James who met him at the University of Pennsylvania where he was a young student, took him under his wing and taught him the philosophy of revolution.

And it was James again who sent Kwame Nkrumah to England to meet George Padmore and to come into contact for the first time with men like Kenyatta, Banda, and Nyerere. They formed a group called the African Liberation Bureau. And as a result of this, James is one of the fathers of African abolition of colonialism.

I think this man will only be appreciated when he's gone. He has written a lot of books; for example, (popularly called *Mariners, Renegades, and Castaways*); *The Life of Herman Melville*, *Party Politics in the West Indies*; and the *Case for West Indian Self Government*, which was responsible for the insurrection in 1968 in the Caribbean.

He also wrote *State Capitalism and World Revolution*, a critique of Marxism. He was one of the first to write the history of the West Indies; his *Black Jacobins* is a classic on the Haitian revolution.

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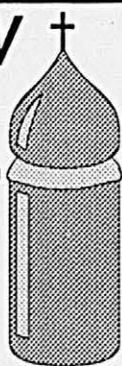
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**Time:** 5:30 p.m.

**Place:** 1550 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West

GM Building, Room 403-2

**RSVP:** 848-2711



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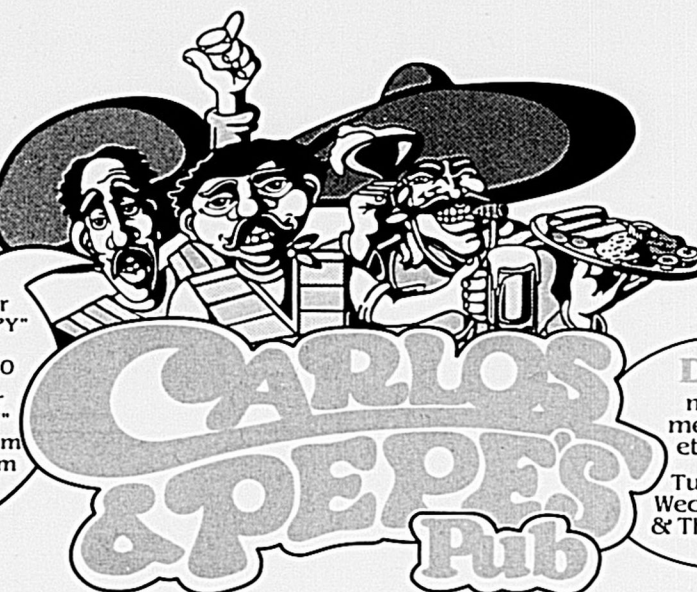
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